

IN THE CLAIMS:

**1. (Previously Amended)** A method for generating a signal rich in prosody information comprising the steps of:

inserting in said signal a plurality of phonemes represented by phoneme symbols,

inserting in said signal a duration specification associated with each of said phonemes,

inserting, for at least one of said phonemes, a plurality of at least two prosody parameter specifications, with each specification of a prosody parameter specifying a target value for said prosody parameter, and a point in time for reaching said target value, which point in time is unrestricted to any particular point within said duration, to thereby generate a signal adapted for converting into speech.

**2. (Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 where said at least one phoneme has ~~of said~~ two prosody parameter specifications that specify ~~specifies~~ pitch.

**3. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where at least one of said two prosody parameter specifications specifies energy.

**4. (Previously Amended)** The method of claim 1 where source of information for said phonemes is text.

**5. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where either one of said at least two prosody specifications specifies an energy with a target value corresponding to silence.

**6 (Cancelled).**

**7. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where said point in time for reaching target value of a specified prosody parameter of a phoneme from said plurality of phonemes is expressed in terms of time offsets from the beginning of phonemes.

**8 (Cancelled)**

**9 (Cancelled).**

**10. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where said signal also includes text specifications.

**11 (Cancelled).**

**12 (Cancelled).**

**13. (Original)** The method of claim 10 where said signal also includes image specifications.

**14. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where said point in time is specified as an offset from beginning of said one of said phonemes.

**15. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where said at least two prosody parameter specifications comprise at least two pitch specifications.

**16. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where said at least two prosody parameter specifications comprise at least two pitch specifications followed by an energy specification.

**17. (Original)** The method of claim 1 where said at least two prosody parameter specifications comprise a plurality of one or more pitch specifications and a plurality of one or more energy specifications.

**18. (Previously Amended)** The method of claim 1 where said at least one of said phonemes includes more than two prosody parameter specifications, with each specification of a prosody parameter specifying a target value for said prosody parameter

to reach and a point in time for reaching said target value, which point in time is not *a priori* restricted to any particular point within said duration.

**19. (Original)** The method of claim 18 where each of at least two of said more than two parameter specifications specifies a pitch target value and a time for reaching said pitch target value.

**20. (Original)** The method of claim 18 where each of at least two of said more than two parameter specifications specifies an energy target value and a time for reaching said energy target value.

**21. (Currently Amended)** A method for generating a signal rich in prosody information comprising:

a first step for inserting in said signal a plurality of phoneme symbols,

a second step for inserting in said signal a desired duration of each of said phoneme symbols,

a third step for inserting, for at least one of said phonemes, at least one prosody parameter specification that consists of a target value that said prosody parameter is to reach within said duration of said at least one of said phonemes, ~~said third step being enabled to explicitly specify~~ a time offset from the beginning of the duration of said phoneme that is greater than zero and less than the duration of said phoneme for reaching said target value, and a delimiter between said target value and said time offset.

**22. (Original)** A method of claim 21 where said prosody parameter value is unrestricted at other than said chosen time offset.

**23. (Currently Amended)** The method for creating a signal responsive to a text input that results in a sequence of descriptive elements, including, a TTS sentence ID element; a gender specification element, if gender specification is desired; an age specification element, if gender specification is desired; a number of text units

specification element; and a detail specification the text units, **the improvement comprising the step of:**

including in said detail specification of said text units

- preface information that includes indication of number of phonemes,
- for each phoneme of said phonemes, an indication of number of parameter information collections ~~tuples~~, N, and
- N parameter information collections ~~tuples~~, each of said collections ~~tuple~~-specifying a prosody parameter target value and a selectably chosen point in time for reaching said target value.

**24. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 23 where said text units are bytes of text.

**25. (Currently Amended)** The method of claim 23 where said parameter information collections ~~tuples~~ relate to pitch.

**26. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 23 where N is an integer greater than 1.

**27. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 23 where said preface includes a Dur\_Enable indicator, and when said Dur\_Enable indicator is at a predetermined state, said step of including also includes, a phoneme duration value for each phoneme of said phonemes.

**28. (Currently Amended)** The method of claim 23 where said preface includes an F0\_Contour\_Enable indicator that is set at a predetermined state when said signal includes said N parameter information collections ~~tuples~~.

**29. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 23 where said preface includes a Energy\_Contour\_Enable indicator, and when said Energy\_Contour\_Enable indicator is

at a predetermined state, said step of including also includes, one or more energy value parameters.

**30. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 29 where said energy value parameters specify energy at beginning, middle, or/and end of phoneme pertaining to said Energy\_Contour\_Enable indicator.

**31. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 23 where said preface includes a listing of said phonemes.

**32. (Currently Amended)** A method for generating a signal for a chosen synthesizer that employs text, phoneme, and prosody information input to generate speech, comprising the steps of:

receiving a first number, M, of phonemes specification;

receiving, for at least some phoneme, a second number, N, representing number of parameter information collections ~~tuples~~ to be received for the phoneme;

receiving N parameter tuples, each of said collections ~~tuple~~ specifying a parameter target value and a time for reaching said target value;

translating said parameter information collections ~~tuples~~ to form translated prosody information that is suitable for said chosen synthesizer; and

including said translated prosody information in said signal.

**33. (Previously Presented)** The method of claim 32 further comprising:

a step, preceding said step of receiving said second number, M phoneme specifications; and

a step of including in said signal phoneme specification information pertaining to said received M phoneme specifications, which information is compatible with said chosen synthesizer.

**34. (Currently Amended)** The method of claim 32 further comprising the steps of

receiving, following said step of receiving said N parameter information collections, energy information; and

including in said signal a translation of said energy information, which translation is adapted for employment of the translated energy information by said chosen synthesizer.